

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) Apparatus for neutralizing the electrostatic charge in hydrocarbon fluid by corona discharge, comprising:

a mass of filter material;

an electrical conductor having ~~branched conductive paths~~ a main conductive path and a plurality of cooperating electrically conductive paths extending from the main conductive path and terminating in a pointed configuration spaced from the main conductive path; and

means for directing the flow of hydrocarbon fluid to be treated through said mass of filter material and in contact with said conductor, whereby the electrostatic charge in the fluid is neutralized by corona discharge.

2. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 1 wherein said conductor is connected to electrical ground.

3. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 2 wherein said conductor is located downstream of said mass of filter material.

4. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 3 wherein said conductor is an anti-static cord.

5. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 4 wherein said conductor is an anti-static tinsel.

6. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 1 wherein said electrical conductor includes a perforated electrically conductive tube with apertures being defined by pointed edges.

7. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 6 wherein the pointed edges extend radially inward from the apertures.

8. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 1 wherein said electrical conductor is formed of an electrically conductive mesh material.
9. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 8 wherein the mesh material is stainless steel.
10. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 8 wherein said mass of filter material surrounds a centrally disposed perforated tube and said mesh material is caused to surround at least a portion of said perforated tube.
11. (Previously presented) The apparatus defined in Claim 1 wherein said electrical conductor includes electrically connected metal fibers.
12. (Amended) Apparatus for neutralizing the electrostatic charge in hydrocarbon fluid by corona discharge comprising:
 - central perforated tube;
 - a mass of filter material surrounding said tube;
 - an electrical conductor interdigitated between said tube and said mass of filter material, said electrical conductor having a main conductive path and a plurality of cooperating electrically conductive paths extending from the main conductive path and terminating in a pointed configuration spaced from the main conductive path; and
 - means for directing the flow of hydrocarbon fluid to be treated through said mass of filter material and in contact with said conductor, whereby the electrostatic charge ~~into~~ in the fluid is neutralized by corona discharge.